

THE MANILA CARNIVAL⁸

The Mardi-Gras of the Orient is the Manila Carnival, held annually on historic Wallace Field in Manila during the month of February, when the climate of the Islands is at its best.

The Philippine Carnival Association was organized in 1908 by a group of civic-spirited citizens including Colonel George T. Langhorne of the United States Army, a brother of Lady Astor. In the beginning an American and foreign enterprise, the Carnival has more and more tended to become a- Filipino *fiesta*. The Director General in recent years has been Arsenio N. Luz, a jolly and popular Filipino who personifies the god of pleasure.

Almost overnight the carnival city is created. First a fence is erected around the field. Inside the magician wields his wand. Buildings arise. Exhibits are installed. Joy-producing devices present themselves. Amidst intense excitement an election is held to decide on the queen of the carnival, who will reign over her happy subjects and for one year will be known as Miss Philippines. Soon the opening night arrives. The myriads of lights are turned on. There is the Carnival ready to receive the grouch and the rounder, the saint and the sinner, and for a price to give them a good time.

Governmental and commercial exhibits are a part of the Carnival. Formerly these were installed in elaborately and artistically constructed buildings. Two disastrous fires diminished the enthusiasm of the exhibitors. Also, in recent years the provinces have not been financially able to

continue providing the needed backing. The result has been that to a certain extent the commercial fair leaves an impression of general decadence. However, what has been temporarily lost by the Carnival in the general artistic feature of its com-

⁸ Section read by Representative Serafin Marabut, Secretary-Treasurer of the Philippine Carnival Association.